THE LATTER-DAY SAINTS'

MILLENNIAL STAR.

"Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrha in the day of judgment, than for that city."—MAT. x, 15.

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RELIGION UNDER REPAIRS.

BY ELDER DAVID O. DUNBAR.

Streams of new theories still continue to pour into the pail of the so-called Christian religions. When it is considered that this has been going on for many years, and that those who have taken part in it have cried out loudly against divine revelation as a means of adjustment for religious difficulty, there is something strangely inconsistent in the premises. Even those who are wise enough to admit that for a long period "the clergy and the laity, the learned and the unlearned, men, women and children, have all at once been buried in the most abominable idolatry," have never seemed to realize, even in the face of so deplorable a state of things, that the very means they deny is the only one by which religious ordinances and discipline can legally be restored in purity. What could be more radically in conflict with the Lord's dealings than the present action of men in spreading the fine texture of ancient Christianity over the ungainly model of metaphysics; and with the human-invented scissors of modern science, trimming off a piece here and another there, which they assert "are no longer needed!"

There is something admirable in bringing to bear the light of Holy Writ, and by directing its rays so that they will fall upon the heaps of accumulated traditions, detecting error and discerning truth. But even in this, unaided by revelation, there is danger, for it has been conclusively proven that the most learned "divines" of Christendom differ on the interpretation of Scripture, thus showing how that once lost the truths of heaven cannot be regained with any degree of certainty through reasoning, even by the greatest wisdom that man is capable of attaining through study. But to-day there are those, and some in high places too, who actually presume to "improve" the religion of the Bible,—that is, by cutting it down to suit the "advanced state of society." Think of the audacity of man's undertaking to rescind measures and commandments instituted by the God of heaven, and ascribing as justification that the natural progress of affairs demands these modifying amendments! How

shamefully absurd to think that poor erring humanity can improve that great plan devised by the wisdom of the All-wise Creator before the foundation of the world, and ordained to be the only means of salvation to the human family! This unwarrantable mode of procedure is not however entirely of modern origin; on the contrary, it dates far back in the history of Christianity; indeed, there have been few ages that have not recorded the action of "men rising up, teaching perverse things to draw away disciples after them."

We read in Mosheim's History of the Church, that "the schisms and commotions that arose in the Church from a mixture of Oriental and Egyptian philosophy with the Christian religion, were in the second century increased by those Grecian philosophers who embraced the doctrine of Christ."

A striking instance of what man's ambition and philosophy have done for Christianity may be seen in the career of Praxeas, one of those illustrious scholars, who became a "Christian convert" in the second century, and of whom the historian (Dr. Mosheim) says: "He denied any real distinction between the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, and maintained that the Father, sole Creator of all things, had united to himself the human nature of Christ. Hence his followers were called "Monarchians," because of their denying a plurality of persons in the Deity." There are many of the school of Praxeas in our own day who ambitiously contend for the supremacy of their own peculiar views. Among them are persons who seem to be earnestly concerned for the welfare of the people, and who might, in some degree, be called philanthropists; but there is, in the doings of all of them, the same great error—they essay, by their own wisdom, to regain that which only divine revelation can restore.

Few have realised the inadequacy of their own power. The great reformer, Wesley, seems to have had an idea of it when he soliloquised:—

Almighty God of love,
Set up the attracting sign,
And summons whom Thou dost approve
For messengers divine;
From favored Abraham's seed,
The new apostles choose,
In isles and continents to spread
The dead-reviving news.

A favorite argument with some "divines" is that as Ptolemy's views on astronomy, and many other scientific theories have undergone the inevitable changes which time and progress call for, so should we expect the increased light of the present age to expunge from religious tenets those "antiquated" precepts, not in keeping with the times.

One of the most distressing apprehensions of the apostle Paul was, that the people, through the action of those who were already perverting the Gospel of Christ, would be "shaken in mind" and deceived. In one of his solicitous appeals to the Church on the subject, he encouragingly wrote: "Now I praise you, brethren, that ye remember me in all things, and *keep the ordinances as I delivered them to you*" (1 Cor. xi, 2). Had this been effectually done till the present, there would be a very different condition of society in Christendom to-day, for Christians in every land would then have been in the unity of the faith, which is so beautifully portrayed in the apostle's wise counsels, "That ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment."

The lamentably contentious state of religious society, and the shameful controversies among the clerical dignitaries and other polemics, may all be attributed to the great disregard that these teachers of the people have shown to the sacred obligation "Tarry until ye receive power from on high!" The very reverse of this has been done. Men have been sent to college, and the only pre-requisite qualification seems to have been a desire to be a salaried preacher, a fancied call to the ministry, coupled with the ready cash necessary to obtain a certificate, and the information to them has been, "Tarry at Cambridge (or some other place of learning) until you have received documentary power from the apostles of

worldly knowledge, then you may go and preach the Gospel." What a contrast! Can it be wondered at that conflicting theories are so numerous, when philosophers and worldly-minded savants are self-selected "for the work of the ministry?" Is it strange that they should preach a Gospel devoid of the inspirational influences which graced Christ's Church in ancient days? Some are sincere, however, for engaged in this vexatious work of overhauling and correcting religious doctrine, are men whose conscientious and fearless deportment, we are compelled to acknowledge, illicits admiration.

In Scotland there seems to be an extraordinary revolution. One U. P. minister of considerable prominence has discovered that infant baptism is unscriptural, and in his honestly zealous efforts to make known his "new light," has lost his appointment, but has since increased his congregation immensely in pastures new. Another declares from his pulpit that "time and space for repentance may be looked for after death," and proceeds to substantiate it from Scripture, notwithstanding the orthodox "confession of faith," to sustain which he receives his handsome stipend from the state treasury. The presbytery have been fearfully concerned about these and other teachers of "heresy," and have spent no small amount of time endeavoring to divest the "new light" advocates of their clerical authority, but in vain, for the opinion is fast gaining ground that the "confession of faith" having it-self been founded on the opinions of men is scripturally unsound and doctrinally untrue.

It is possible that this class of men may, finally, through their "new light" investigations, get hold of a pretty fair imitation of the Gospel, as taught by the Savior, although it is very doubtful that they will arrive at sufficiently certain conclusions to put to an end religious controversy. But there is a principle of the utmost importance which these reformers seem to lose sight of, namely:—That all the discoveries which they can possibly make, even if they should arrive at a correct knowledge of the Gospel itself, together with all their learned accomplishments, can never empower them to administer in the ordinances of Christ's Gospel. As well might Simon the sorcerer have gone around laying on hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost, after realizing that it was a correct doctrine, as for men now-a-days to presume to officiate in the ordinances of Christ's Church, simply because such ordinances are necessary.

NO, the need necessity for an ordinance certainly cannot confer the power to administer that ordinance. And notwithstanding the present state of confusion in this regard, this fact will become more and more apparent; for people will yet acknowledge, and that at no distant day, when Christ disowns and repudiates all clerical assumptions of power, that not even in the appearance of an angel, itself a great blessing conferred in our day,—or in the necessity for an ordinance, or in the efforts of man, by his own wisdom, to "search out God," but in the actual bestowal from heaven, of the keys of the priesthood or authority upon that favored youth, Joseph Smith, was the long lost power restored to man to administer in the sacred ordinances of Christ's Church. And we trust that many will in that day, see in the beautiful order of heaven thus illustrated and exemplified, a most righteous propriety and infinite wisdom!

The opinions and criticisms of others deserve our respectful consideration. They come to us as part of the materials which go to make up our condition and our life, and they should form at least one factor in every decision. At the same time, it is never to be forgotten that these opinions come to us, not to be authoritative, but as subject-matter for our consideration and judgment. We are to treat them with neither defiance nor submission; we should neither dismiss them as worthless, nor yield to them as infallible; but give them consideration, and then deal with them accordingly.

THE SCIENTIFIC TEST.

(From the Salt Lake "Contributor.")

No matter how corrupt persons may be, or how little effort they may make to merit the title of being good, there are none so far lost to a desire for the respect of their fellow-beings as to have no pleasure in the expression of their fellows, that they have said a good word or performed a good deed. And, on the other hand, when they are regarded as wrong-doers, and feel conscious of the justice of that opinion, they experience a degree of regret, according to the offence and the condition of the transgressor.

It would seem, under these circumstances, an easy matter to influence persons to do good, where the good is attended with pleasure, and the evil with pain; and it would be so, were it not that the opinions of men differ as to the standard of truth and error, and consequently as to what is good and what is bad. As instances of this, there are hundreds of different religions upon the earth, all professing to pattern after the doctrines of our Savior. Sometimes the anomaly occurs of two nations, both calling upon the same God, in the name of the same Savior, praying and fighting against each other. This was most strikingly illustrated during the great war of the rebellion. The Northern Methodists were praying for the North, and fighting their brethren of the South, and *vice versa*, though both professed, not only to be Christians, but were of the same sect and denomination. Yet the Southerner, who fought in the defence of what he conceived to be the right, would do so with as much sincerity, and would feel as great pleasure in knowing that he had done his part well, as the Northerner, who, in going to battle on the other side, was crushing out a rebellion that was likely to have disrupted the Union.

In the so-called exact sciences, a careful study of the principles which govern the elements investigated, produces a unity of results. As an example, if a chemist who thoroughly understands the science of chemistry gives an analysis of a grain of wheat, the same results would be given of similar grains by as many chemists as would analyze them; or, if they did not, the conclusion would follow, either that chemistry was not a true science, or that some of the chemists, or all of them, were ignorant of its principles. Other examples might be quoted, but the above illustrates the idea I wish to convey, and the reader may multiply examples at pleasure. The particular point to which I wish to draw attention is, that the chemist strictly conforms to the rules of the science, and declares the result after he has applied the principles he professes to believe.

One might conclude, since such exactness and unity can be attained by study, surely study, or learning, is the key by which mankind may arrive at a standard of unity on all questions that affect them; and the conclusion that naturally follows is, as it is impossible for all men to become learned in the principles that affect the welfare of man, here and hereafter, a few must be employed to study for the rest. This is the conclusion that mankind seem to have adopted, in this generation, in regard to the science called Theology. Thousands of men are employed to tell their fellows what course of life is necessary here, to enjoy the greatest degree of happiness hereafter; and strange to say, though these teachers are as assiduous in their research as are the professors of other sciences, they do not agree. Shall we apply the same test to them as to the others? If so, which is wrong, the professors or the science?

So far as Christianity is concerned, they acknowledge that Jesus Christ was the prototype of perfect humanity, and that the Scriptures were and are the guide; and that upon the observance of the teachings laid down in them depends the eternal welfare of man. One would think, under these circumstances, that the science

of Theology would be narrowed down to a very easy study. Yet, as before remarked, there are hundreds of different denominations, all making these professions.

Since the learning of man, then, has failed to discover a plan by which man may arrive at a unity of knowledge concerning this most important question, let us study for a moment the principles of this science, as they were practiced anciently, and learn, if we can, how the ancients arrived at a certainty as regards the truth of the science of Theology.

I will make a quotation from the Scriptures, which the people of Christendom profess to hold in such reverence: "The wisdom of this world is foolishness with God." As God is the founder of the intelligence that we hope to become possessed of, how discouraging this must be to the men who have spent their lives in study to prepare themselves to teach the will of God, and to those who have employed them, to know that their research has been vain, and that in so doing, so far as they depended upon the wisdom of man for the light they sought, they were departing from the principles of the science they were studying. Again: "For what man knoweth the things of man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God no man knoweth, but the Spirit of God." "As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts higher than your thoughts."

The way then broadens before us, and we begin to realize the futility of human wisdom, unaided, in attaining the desired object. We are entering the threshold of the science of Theology, and if we are honestly desirous of arriving at a knowledge of the truth, we will lay aside the tenets of men, and seek unto the Great Fountain Head for the desired intelligence, profiting by the experience of those who have enjoyed the blessings that we desire.

When we have firmly decided upon this course, how easy the next lesson seems: "If any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself."

They did know of the doctrine anciently; there was no question with them in regard to the testimonies they had, but they enjoyed a glorious certainty concerning the truths that they professed to practice and teach, and with which the bickerings and disunion of the professed Christian world of the present day presents a sorry contrast.

If they did "know of the doctrine," they must have done the will of the Father. What, then, did they do? This was the thought that suggested itself to the multitude gathered on the day of Pentecost, when observing the effects of obedience to the principles of the science of Theology upon the disciples gathered in an upper room. The Apostle Peter said, in answer to their inquiry: "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call."

Peter, you will remember, had been teaching them faith on the Lord Jesus, and Him crucified, and they manifested their faith by asking what they should do to be saved.

It may be well to remark here, that Peter answered from his own experience, having a perfect knowledge of the efficacy of the principles taught to the end desired. And when those principles were obeyed by the assembled multitude, they also received the same satisfaction as did Peter and his associates, concerning the truth of the principles they had embraced; and they were consequently no longer dependent upon the testimonies of others, but all repentant and obedient believers "knew of the doctrine for themselves," being possessed of the Spirit of God, they knew of the things of God.

The Savior, in sending forth His apostles anciently, said: "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.

And these signs shall follow them that believe: in my name shall they cast out devils, they shall speak with new tongues, they shall take up serpents, and if they drink any deadly thing it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick and they shall recover."

The professors of Christianity philosophize this away, together with numerous other passages of similar import, saying that these gifts and this knowledge are no longer essential; and the hundreds of different professors of Christianity offer us in their place the harrowing uncertainty of the precepts of men.

What do the chemists and other scientists say to this? They say: The principles of science are eternal. Though many of them are of but recent discovery, they always existed, and would always have produced similar results, under the same circumstances, had men possessed the knowledge of properly applying them. Does this same principle apply to the science of Theology?

A young man in this the nineteenth century, anxious to gain a knowledge of how to do the will of the Father, but harrassed by the conflicting opinions of men, went to the Father and asked Him how he could obey His will. He obtained the desired information, and a commission, after first rendering obedience himself, to go and teach others.

The believers in his testimony, as the disciples anciently, testify that Theology is a true science, from actual experience, and not only is their obedience followed by an unquestionable testimony of the truth of the principles they have embraced, but their testimonies are confirmed by the gifts and blessings following the believer, as promised and realized anciently.

Our fathers and mothers are these disciples. You may imagine how they appreciate those grand and glorious, yet pure and simple principles of light and enlightenment, after a long night of darkness. Fancy them being in the midst of an apostate Christianity, reading of the blessings of the Gospel, as enjoyed anciently, and feeling in their hearts that could they have enjoyed such blessings, no sacrifices would have been too great. Yet they were complacently told by their religious teachers that those blessings were reserved for a favored few who had lived in former days.

Can we wonder, my young brethren and sisters, that some of us do not have as great testimonies as our parents have had? How different are our circumstances. They, hungering and thirsting after a knowledge of the will of God, but unsatisfied until the Gospel found them; we, surrounded by friends, anxious that we may embrace the principles that have been the means of so much joy and consolation to them. We cannot fully appreciate the blessings we enjoy, perhaps, as they could, any more than a man can appreciate pure air, who has never breathed any other. But, thank God, the principles have been demonstrated to be true, and we can prove our appreciation of the truths of the Gospel by our faithfulness in obeying the true principles of Theology, and that our fathers and mothers' examples have not been in vain; and we can also prove the truth of the Scriptures, both ancient and modern, and of the teachings of the servants of God in our day.

W. W. TAYLOR.

THE BENEFITS OF DECISION.

Few people, perhaps, realize the benefits arising from the ability to decide on a course to be pursued. A philosopher once remarked, "be sure you're right, then go ahead." But it will be readily seen that the difficulty doesn't lie in the going ahead, as much as it does in the deciding on a correct course to pursue. There are many who are "gifted" with the faculty to "go ahead," and some do this blindly and foolishly, heedless as

to the course pursued so that it be energetically maintained. This is wrong. "Fools rush in, where angels fear to tread," says the proverb. Not for lack of decision, however, on the part of the angelic beings, but because their greater wisdom shows them a better [redacted] ment are as necessary as decision; and when we find a combination of all these great qualities the world is surprised, and we then see a "great man."

We wonder sometimes what virtues may lie concealed as the secret of successful men, and it is frequently thought to be luck or fortune, or some happy circumstance. True all these, which are really the providences of God, may and do often conduce towards success, but it will also be perceived that oftimes much depends on the gifts of God bestowed in the organization of the individual himself. Organized as the Creator would have him for a certain work, fashioned to His mind who knoweth the future, such a man stands forth as an exemplification of God's ruling providences, and becomes His instrument of victory and renown. Yet foolish people praise the work and ignore the Maker. Who created Napoleon, Washington, Alexander, Cyrus and others? Before they were born He knew them, and before they were conceived He fashioned them that they might accomplish His purposes among the nations.

But to return, in reading history we find these and other great men had certain natural qualifications, and in some cases virtues which they acquired in their efforts through life. Among these qualifications prominently stands DECISION. History says that this quality gave Wellington the day at Waterloo. When it was rumored that the Duke had "decided" to keep his position come what might, Sir Sydney Smith remarked, "O, if he said that, of course the other fellow must give way." His decision of character was well known, and it were folly to resist his firm set policy. But it will be perceived that his de[redacted] sions as to the condition of the war. He took in the situation, comprehended the details, examined the position of the enemy, then as if by an inspiration he *decided*—and was VICTORIOUS. This is the kind of decision we would advocate, and the class which will warrant us in "going ahead." Stubbornness, perversity, reckless haste—these are not *decision!* No, sometimes we see them manifested by people to their own destruction; they "go ahead" fast enough, but they are on the wrong track; they are firm enough, but they are in a bad cause; they decide too quickly, and they are the "fools" who "rush in," and of course go to destruction.

Let the Saints be among that class who temper their actions with wisdom,—who cast the eye of sound judgment on their surroundings, and suffer the light of wisdom to shine on their pathway; who when they plant the tree of experience, mix with the soil a few grains of common sense, and moisten the roots with the waters of understanding; these will become prudent leaders of men, as they are intelligent followers of God, seeking the welfare of the greatest number, and who only count themselves victorious when they have accomplished the downfall of wickedness and the everlasting triumph of right. This is the decision which the Lord will endorse, and which is cultivated only through His Spirit, and is ever crowned by His eternal blessing.

JOB.

"Yes," said an American professor to his class, "*pro* and *con* signify opposite things, as may be seen in the words 'progress' and 'Congress.'"

Wife: "But, my dear, I shall catch cold coming down so late to let you in." Husband: "Oh no, my love, I'll rap you up well before you come down."

A proof-copying clerk at the French Ministry of the Interior was lately asked what place he occupied there. "Oh, a very good place," he replied—"between the stove and the window!"

THE LATTER-DAY SAINTS' MILLENNIAL STAR.

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 1881.

AN EXECUTIVE OUTRAGE.

For the past few weeks, the press of the United States has teemed with comments on an executive outrage perpetrated on the residents of Utah Territory, by the "Gentile" Governor sent there as a satrap to preside over the affairs of a people, whom he hates with a hatred as palpable and defined as it is unjust and uncalled for. The action for which he is universally condemned by the right-minded thinking population, is that although the time-honored delegate to Congress, George Q. Cannon, was re-elected by an overwhelming majority of thousands, while his opponent received but a few hundred votes altogether, this shallow-pated bigot used his executive position for political ends, and issued a certificate of election to the insignificant opposition candidate, whose constituency was equivalent to a corporal's guard compared with the great people who possess and inhabit that flourishing Territory, thus ignoring the vote of the masses, and robbing the rightful delegate of his seat.

We have hesitated crediting a rumor which would place an officer of the United States Government in such a position of contempt before the civilized world. But after waiting some time, the conclusion is forced upon us that, in spite of its inconsistency, the thing is positively true. The leading papers of both parties are denouncing the Governor in strongest language, and showing up the gross assumption of power which has deprived a hundred thousand citizens from proper representation in Congress. The Washington *Capital*, one of the most incisive commentators in question, says:

"Governor Murray, of Utah, has transcended the power of his office by his flagrantly illegal action in tendering the certificate of election to Allan Campbell as delegate to Congress from that Territory. Murray, by this act, writes himself down as an ass, and puts himself upon record as a legalized liar. Campbell was never elected, and Murray knew it.

"Cannon was elected, and Murray knew it. Yet in the teeth of all this acquaintance with facts, this gubernatorial Dogberry has the audacity to issue a certificate, in the shape of a ukase, upsetting the legal votes of the citizens, and declaring, as by pronunciamento, who the delegate to the Congress of the United States shall be.

"Even were the charge that Delegate Cannon is not a naturalized citizen true, Murray's action would be still utterly, completely and unqualifiedly illegal. How much more so it is when we all know the falsity of the charge will be emphasized by the action of the House, when it rebukes Governor Murray in proper style by throwing out the impudent fellow Campbell whom

he essays to foist upon it, and vindicates Cannon in a proper and practical way.

"This contemptible system of warfare upon the Mormon people will never meet with favor among the right-minded American people, and we do not flatter ourselves over much when we feel assured that the majority of our people are right-minded and believe in fair play."

But the great question is not whether the action is wrong, for that is apparent to the most ordinary observer, nor whether Congress will repudiate the certificate which serves as the candidate's documentary credentials in the House, for that body must unseat the fraudulent member, but whether the Congress of the United States will still continue to refuse Statehood to one of America's largest and most promising Territories, long since possessed of State qualifications, simply because some of the inhabitants have different religious views from the Methodists, Baptists, and other various denominations that surround Washington. For this is the argument used against Statehood, and with the nonsensical falsehoods and *bug-a-boo* stories about "Danites," etc., the Republican Party has succeeded for years in keeping Utah from voting in the Presidential contest, and subjected her citizens to officers of the Republican school, who have wielded authority, and even usurped greater power than that which the centralizing platform of that party could countenance. The Republican Judge McKean had to be removed by Grant for overreaching his authority in that Territory; and changes have been so numerous and in such quick succession, that Salt Lake City is infested with defunct office-holders, whose heads have fallen beneath the axe of power, and whose only occupation is the hungry craving for opportunity to gnaw again at the public crib, and gorge on the earnings of an industrious people. How long the Government will suffer itself to be blinded by these ex-official grumblers, we cannot say, but it is high time that some statesmen proposed an investigation by an unprejudiced committee, consisting, if needs be, of the various parties, to decide as to the qualifications of Utah for Statehood. And let the "horrors" of the "Mormons" be officially unearthed and legally exposed, or forever buried in oblivion.

This "talk" has gone on long enough. And while the morbid taste of the brutal may be gratified by these lying rumors, and the political ends of the party in power are being annually reached and accomplished, let the nation think for itself, and let Congress show its statesmanship, if it possesses any, in settling the vexed "Mormon" question, by something like decent and proper means. As to Governor Murray and his "certificate," that will right itself. The Governor will fall into the official waste-basket like his predecessors, and Campbell, the would-be member, will receive an impetus from the toe of Congress which will land him in the realm of forgetfulness. Let the Saints hope and pray that God may not only avenge Zion of her enemies, but open up a means for her speedy escape from the cruelty and oppression of the wicked; and at no distant day their prayers will be heard, and God will plead a controversy for Zion that shall make the oppressor tremble, and cause His people to rejoice in His goodness forevermore.

RETURNED.—President Carrington returned from the Welsh Conference on Monday last, in good health and spirits.

RELEASE.—Elder Edward Kay is released from laboring as a traveling elder in the Sheffield Conference, to return home on account of ill health.

ARRIVED.—On Tuesday, the first inst., Elder David James arrived in England from Utah. He is here on a visit to relatives, and also expects to attend to some matters of business before returning to his home in Zion. He is in good health and excellent spirits. During his stay in England, his address is Care of William James, Lindley Street, Shrewsbury, Shropshire.

BOUND AND READY.—Those wishing Volume 42 of the MILLENNIAL STAR can obtain it neatly bound at this Office, or of any Conference President throughout the Mission—price 6s. 6d.

DISTRICT MEETING.—A district meeting will be held on March 13, 1881, in the Latter-day Saints' meeting room, at 15a, Hunslet Road, Leeds, at which President Carrington is expected to be present. Meetings will commence at 10.30 a.m., and 2.30 and 6.30 p.m.

CORRESPONDENCE

REPORT FROM LEEDS.

Leeds, Feb. 7, 1881.

President A. Carrington.

Dear Brother,—I feel it my duty to report the labors of the elders laboring in this district, and the condition of the conference generally. The prospects of doing good in the future are quite promising. I had the privilege of baptizing five and re-baptizing one last Saturday evening, one of them quite an intelligent and promising young man and the spirit of enquiry is increasing around Leeds.

Elder Rydalch visited here last week. He reports the districts of Skipton and Keighly, where he has been laboring amongst his relatives and friends, as very promising. He says they had not heard an elder in that part for over twenty years. The people receive him kindly, and he feels confident some will join the Church, and that a good opening will be made in the spring for more labor.

Elder Joseph Robinson is laboring in the Hull district. He has baptized one, re-baptized two, and three others have applied for baptism.

Elder Kewley, who is now in the Isle of Man, has been laboring in the Bradford district with some success; also Elder Farr in the Wakefield district.

I have visited all the fields of labor in this conference, and find the elders doing all the good they can, visiting from house to house and distributing tracts, bearing testimony to the restoration of the Gospel and inviting the people to investigate the truth for themselves. The branches too have tract societies organized, the sisters being employed as well as the brethren distributing tracts among the people; some of whom receive them and make inquiries into the principles, whilst others refuse them.

The general condition of the conference is very good at the present time, both financially and spiritually, considering the scarcity of labor and the general hard times in consequence of the severity of the weather. It is verily true that the preaching of the Gospel at the present time is like "gleaning the grain after the harvest is gathered," but there is considerable inquiry after the principles of our faith. I have received several notes in the last four weeks asking the privilege to visit me, by gentleman of good standing, to enquire after our doctrines, and in some cases considerable good has been done.

The Saints generally feel well in the work; the elders are all well in health and spirits, and manifest a desire to do all they can to discharge the duties of their mission as long as they are required to labor in the field.

Hoping you may prosper in all your labors, the brethren all join me in kind love to you and all the brethren in the office.

Your brother in the Gospel,
JOHN COOPER.

MINUTES OF A DISTRICT MEETING,

HELD IN THE TOWN HALL, SKELMERSDALE, LIVERPOOL CONFERENCE, SUNDAY, JANUARY 23, 1881.

Present from Utah.—Apostle Albert Carrington, President of the European Mission; Elders C. W. Stayner, L. R. Martineau and C. B. Felt, from the Liverpool Office; Elders John Donaldson, President of, and Wm. Probert, jun., John Kynaston and David Cook, traveling elders in the Liverpool Conference.

10.30 a.m.

Singing. Prayer by Elder Kynaston. Singing.

The Sacrament was administered by Elders Cook and Probert.

President Donaldson called for verbal reports of the district, to which Elders Cook, Probert and Kynaston responded briefly. They had labored with much pleasure among the people, and while they were unable to report any recent additions to the Church of Christ, they felt their labors were not in vain. The prevailing sentiments of the Saints were for the spread of the Gospel. But in a few instances members had become indifferent to the cause, and the "first love" that pervaded their souls once, seemed to be dying away. The cause of this was a lack of faith and earnest adherence to the laws of God. They bore testimony that God had blessed them in their labors.

Elders Martineau and Felt addressed the meeting, expressing great pleasure in attending another meeting of Latter-day Saints. They had a personal knowledge of this being the work of God, and briefly pointed out the first principles of the Gospel, in obedience to which all were entitled to a positive testimony of the truth, according to the promise of the Savior, unto them that believe.

Singing. Benediction by Elder Cook.

2.30 p.m.

Singing. Prayer by President Donaldson. Singing.

Elder Stayner read from the Scriptures Rev. xxii, 1—5, and spoke at length on the second advent of the Lord. He showed clearly by logical and Scriptural argument that the Saints would inherit the earth. Jesus would come in the clouds of heaven, accompanied by hosts of angels, and the Saints, who were worthy, would be caught up in the air to meet Him as He descends to the earth. Then will commence the thousand years of Millennial rest, through which Christ will reign as King. The seventh day's rest, which was taken after the creation of the world, was typical of this Sabbatic rest of the Saints, which will take place during the seventh thousand year of the world's existence, "for a thousand years is one day with the Lord." Almost six thousand years have passed and soon its seventh, or great day of rest, will be ushered in.

Singing. Benediction by Elder Felt.

6.30 p.m.

Singing. Prayer by Elder Martineau. Singing.

Apostle Carrington addressed the meeting. It gave him great pleasure to meet with the Saints and those who sought the truth. Many times before he heard the Gospel preached in its purity, he longed to know why men had departed so far from the ancient Gospel doctrine. He resolved to find out the truth, and asked ministers of various churches many questions. But they were unable to give him satisfactory answers; and not until he heard the elders of this Church teach the doctrines revealed to Joseph

the Prophet, did he believe the true Gospel was upon the earth. He then embraced the Gospel and became possessed of an absolute knowledge of its truthfulness. He alluded to the first principles of the Church, quoting Scriptural passages to show their perfect unison with the primitive faith established by Christ and his apostles. No time since the creation had error ever benefitted a human being, truth was all that could make life happy and salvation complete. He closed by admonishing the Saints to live so as to merit a continuance of God's blessings, and to be a light unto the world.

Singing. Benediction by President Donaldson.

CHARLES B. FELT,
Clerk.

The meetings were not only largely attended by Saints, but strangers formed a large part of the congregations, who listened with unabated attention at all the meetings during the day. C. B. F.

BUSINESS HABITS.

—o—

"Habit, at first is but a silken thread,
Fine as the light-winged gossamers that sway
In the warm sunbeams of a summer's day;
A shallow streamlet, rippling o'er its bed;
A tiny sapling, ere its roots are spread;
A yet unhardened thorn upon the spray;
A lion's whelp that hath not scented prey;
A little smiling child obedient led.
Beware! that thread may bind thee as a chain;
That streamlet gather to a fatal sea;
That sapling spread into a gnarled tree;
That thorn, grown hard, may wound and give thee pain;
That playful whelp his murderous fangs reveal;
That child, a giant, crush thee 'neath his heel."

In some of our large mechanical establishments may be seen a machine invented to operate upon cold iron. With all the ease and quiet of a common printing-press, it exerts a force equal to a thousand tons, whilst at every pressure of the "cam" large cubes are pressed out of the solid bar as easily as one can break earthenware or mould clay. It will push its hard steel finger through iron two inches thick, without the slightest jarring or failure in the regularity of its action. What is the secret of this prodigious and constant power? It is found in the accumulated force of the balance-wheel, which, revolving one hundred and thirty times a minute, bears with overwhelming force upon the steel pencil, and must either break the whole machine into fragments, or pierce through every obstacle.

In this ingenious piece of mechanism we have a striking illustration of the power of habit. Who has not seen, in hundreds of instances, a moral force accumulated by it as resistless as that of the balance-wheel? There are times of pressure in every man's life when he would utterly fail but for the help thus afforded; but, fortunately, at the crisis, by the force of principles that have gathered energy by long and persevering habit, he is carried over the dead-point, and then is able to rally his strength for new trials. The vast reserve power that lies in habit has often been noticed by moralists. Man, says Paley, is a bundle of habits; and habit, according to the proverb, is a second nature, which, we all know, is sometimes so powerful as to exterminate the first. Metastasio held so strong an opinion as to the power of repetition in thought and act, that he said: "All is habit in mankind, even virtue itself." Beginning with single acts, habit is formed slowly at first, and it is not till its spider's threads are woven into a thick cable that its existence is suspected. Then it is found that, beginning with cobwebs,

it ends in chains. Gulliver was bound as fast by the Liliputians with multiplied threads as if they had used ropes. "Like flakes of snow that fall unperceived upon the earth," says Jeremy Bentham, "the seemingly unimportant events of life succeed one another. As the snow gathers together, so are our habits formed; no single flake that is added to the pile produces a sensible change; no single action creates, however it may exhibit, a man's character; but as the tempest hurls the avalanche down the mountain, and overwhelms the inhabitant and his habitation, so passion, acting upon the elements of mischief which pernicious habits have brought together by imperceptible accumulation, may overthrow the edifice of truth and virtue."

The force of this principle is strikingly illustrated in the fact that it renders pleasant, things which at first were intensely disagreeable or even painful. Walking upon the quarter-deck of a vessel, though felt at first to be intolerably confined, becomes by custom so agreeable to a sailor, that in his walk on shore, he often hems himself within the same bounds. Lord Kames tells of a man who, having relinquished the sea for a country life, reared in the corner of his garden an artificial mount, with a level summit, resembling most accurately a quarter-deck, not only in shape, but in size, where he generally walked. When Franklin was superintending the erection of some forts on the frontier, as a defence against the Indians, he slept at night in a blanket on the hard floor, and, on his first return to civilized life, could hardly sleep in a bed. Captain Ross and his crew, having been accustomed during their polar wanderings to lie on the frozen snow or the bare rock, afterwards found the accommodations of a whaler too luxurious for them, and he was obliged to exchange his hammock for a chair. The same principle, in another form, is illustrated in the case of persons born blind, or deprived of sight, who acquiring a habit of nice observation through the sense of feeling, astonish us by their accurate descriptions of things which they have examined by means of their exquisitely delicate touch. So powerful is this effect of the constant repetition of actions, that men whose habits are fixed may be almost said to have lost their free agency. Their acts become of the nature of fate, and they are so bound by the chains which they have woven for themselves, that they do that which they have been accustomed to do, even when they know it can yield neither pleasure nor profit.—*Mathews's "Getting on in the World."*

RESULT OF OPPOSITION TO THE TRUTH.

(From the Salt Lake "Juvenile Instructor.")

In all dispensations of the Gospel those who have opposed the work of God have met with sore calamities, except when they sincerely repented of their sins. On the other hand, the faithful Saints have been highly favored of the Lord, and persecution has only increased their faith.

In many instances the troubles which the enemies of truth have sought to bring upon the people of God have proved great blessings to the righteous.

The Saints of latter days, of all people, have tested and know the truth of this statement, both as a body of people, and also by the experience of individuals.

When Pharaoh educated Moses and looked after his welfare, he did not realize that he was educating a prophet of God, to deliver Israel from Egyptian bondage. Nevertheless, such was the case. But suppose that the Lord had given a direct revelation through one of His prophets to the king of Egypt, commanding him to take Moses and educate him in all the language of the Egyptians, and prepare him to lead the children of

Israel out of Egypt. Do you think he would have obeyed the message? I think not. Yet his oppressive measures towards the house of Jacob only called forth the power of God in behalf of His people, and proved a blessing to them, as we see by reading the history of those circumstances in the Bible.

How similar were the results of "Johnson's army," which was sent to Utah to oppress the Saints, because of our holy religion! The troops were intercepted by the hand of Providence, and when they entered Salt Lake City they were in a humiliated condition. Besides that, they brought in mules, harness and wagons, just the things the Saints needed, and sold them at a very low figure.

Many other instances could be referred to, similar in their results, all of which should promote faith in the minds of the rising generation.

When opposition has been brought to bear against the elders when abroad, preaching the Gospel, it has been their experience that good has resulted therefrom. A circumstance occurred about two years since, which will illustrate this:—

In a certain locality in the State of Virginia there lives a well-to-do gentleman, who, for a number of years past, has entertained the elders from Utah when they were in his neighborhood, and treated them with great kindness. On his plantation stands an old meeting-house, which goes by the name of "Liberty." It being under the control of the gentleman referred to, ministers of any denomination were given the privilege of preaching therein.

At the time to which I refer, there were two elders in that section, preaching the Gospel. They had an appointment for meeting in "Liberty" on Sunday afternoon. In the forenoon of the same day, a sectarian preacher held his meeting in the same house.

Being close by, the elders attended this meeting and noticed, during the preacher's remarks, an uneasiness in his manner. They felt that he had something on his mind which he would like to introduce into the thread of his discourse, which was really of a different subject. This impression was soon verified, for all at once he broke forth in a somewhat spiteful style, and said, "Talk about the ministration of angels now-a-days! It is all a delusion. Talk about prophets! It is an absurdity; and if an angel should appear now you could not tell him from an angel of the devil, since he can transform himself into an angel of light."

The elders and people present knew, of course, that his remarks were intended for the Latter-day Saints. But, to their great astonishment, before he got through, he actually referred to the book of Revelations, and proved that in the last days an angel should descend from heaven and place one foot upon the land and the other on the sea, thus making a flat contradiction to his former statement.

Before closing the meeting, he gave notice that, inasmuch as the building was in a dilapidated condition, they would repair it, and make it suitable for winter service. He also made an appointment for one of his fellow-preachers to hold meeting there two weeks (I believe) from that day.

The minister was invited to dine at the house where the elders stayed, and after partaking of a good meal, one of the elders invited him to come to the afternoon meeting, which, under the circumstances, he could not well refuse, though he probably felt like it.

He took a seat near the stand. After opening exercises, and a few remarks from one of the elders, his companion arose and delivered a discourse with much power and plainness, upon the organization of the Church, with apostles, prophets, etc., and the ministration of holy angels.

The astonished preacher sat as if spell-bound, and occasionally the speaker would turn to him and remark, "That is so, Mr. H.," and Mr. H. would nod his head in the affirmative.

A few Sundays after, the same preacher came to the meeting he had appointed, and after the fellow-preacher had finished his discourse (which, by the way, he did without persecuting anybody), he arose, and, looking over the audience and finding

the elders were not present, remarked, in a bitter spirit, that it was the first time he had heard the Gospel preached in that house, as he had generally been followed in his meetings by angels of the devil, referring to the elders from Utah. He manifested so much bitterness, even speaking evil of those who entertained the elders, that some became disgusted and left the house.

The result of this wicked course was soon manifest among the people. He had broken down his influence among them, failed to repair the meeting-house according to promise, and while those two elders remained in that section, he did not come back to preach, leaving the house, with few exceptions, to be used by the elders at pleasure.

At another time, a minister of the same church gave notice (so the people relate it,) that he would hold a meeting in "Liberty" and expose "Mormonism," telling the people that it originated with a man named Smith, somewhere in Europe.

The elders being in that neighborhood, went to the meeting, and found a considerable number had assembled, many, doubtless, with itching ears, to hear fables.

After waiting for some time, the people became confused and noisy, as no preacher appeared. They waited on, but he did not come, and at last they dispersed in confusion, and went to their homes. The reason given for the minister not coming to fill his appointment was, that he had taken sick, and, strange as it may appear, in a few days he died.

Thus, their attempts to impede the work of God all proved fruitless and disastrous, while the elders were strengthened in their faith, and received more testimony to the truth of the message they bore. Through this, and all similar circumstances, is verified the word of the Lord to Joseph Smith, the prophet, when speaking of the enemies of this work: "They can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth."

M. F. COWLEY.

SWEETLY COMPLIMENTARY.—A girl wrote to her lover that she had been so ill that her doctor told her she must absolutely think of nothing; "and so, my darling," she added, "I just thought of you all the time."

Young Hopeful, aged six, who is showing a visitor his drawing-book, containing alleged representations of a "bird" and a "horse," as indicated in words underneath the drawings: "These are my worst drawings, Mr. Smith." Mr. Smith: "Indeed, Tommy! and where are your other ones?" Young Hopeful: "Oh, I haven't drawed them yet!"

Some years ago, at a great sale of wine, all the odd lots were purchased by a grocer in a small way in the old town of Edinburgh. The agent had the curiosity to visit him some time after and inquire what possible use he could have for such material. He was shown, by way of answer, a huge vat, where all the liquors, from humble Gladstone to Imperial Tokay, were fermenting together. "And what," he asked, "do you propose to call this?" "I'm not very sure," replied the grocer, "but I think it's going to turn out port."

Billy Brown was a sharp witted son of Ireland, full of good humor and quick at repartee. Billy was once summoned as a witness in a case at a London assize, and on his appearance he entered the witness box in his ordinary costume, very dirty and rather ragged. The opposing counsel thought to confuse the witness by poking fun at his shabby appearance. He asked Billy if those clothes were his best. "Ah, sure, sir, they're not!" "Oh, then, you have better clothes, which you wear on Sunday perhaps?" "It's mighty thrue, sir." "A white vest, gray coat, knee breeches, and a glossy castor, eh?" "Ah, you've met me somewhere!" cried Billy. "No," replied the counsel, "I never met you before, but since you confess that you have good clothes, are you not ashamed to appear in court in that disgraceful state?" "Not a bit of it," said Billy, pointing to the judge—"sure his lordship's in his working dress, and I'm in mine!"